



email: info@shropshire-disability.net

Shropshire Disability Network Your Voice, Your Connections www.shropshire-disability.net

Registered Charity No 1148256

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yourvoice

February-mid March 2015



**Story on
page 4,
plus your
chance
to get
involved**

Pavement parking is illegal, dangerous and widespread. But what can be done about it? The answer seems to be – plenty!

Runners get the year off to a good start for SDN

The "Morning After" Run is organised by a committee of Church Stretton residents on 1 January every year to raise funds for local charities. I have been taking part for more years than I can remember but don't know how old the run actually is! Maybe one of our readers will make contact and enlighten me!

The idea is simple - A run of about five miles over the lower hills of the town. The event attracts top fell runners as well as social runners from a wide area.

Walkers and slower runners have the option of an easier three mile route.

The entry fee includes soup and a roll at the Social Club which is the race HQ. So popular is the run that this

Grace Hough, SDN's sports ambassador, reports on some generous and welcome news which came just in time to brighten up the New Year.

year the start was delayed in order to to accept all the entries. One of the main organisers, Terry Davies, approached me and said SDN had been chosen as one of the charities to benefit from the fund raising.

So I was delighted to accept a cheque for £300, which was presented to SDN at the prize giving on 1 January. Five other cheques for £300 were presented to other charities.

I'm sure I speak for SDN's many hundreds of members and supporters in thanking Terry and his team for their generosity.

PS: A thank you letter has since gone to Terry for this very generous donation which will be put to good use for all our members.

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**Don't miss the 12 March
SDN Members' Meeting!**

**10.30 for an 11.00am
start, at Oswestry Cricket
Club. Great speakers as
always, and great raffle
too ... not to mention the
tea and biscuits!**



Shropshire Disability Network Gold Challenge 2014

Trio of teams beat target well ahead of year's end

By Ruby Hartshorn

Last year we told you about a challenge that we hoped would become our main fund-raiser for 2014. It was to link in with the Gold Challenge 2014 that was part of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow and another build on the legacy of London 2012



Three teams achieved - clocking up the target of 2014 km well before the end of 2014. Some team members may not have completed recording their kilometres, so we ask that they do so asp.

A total of 186 teams took part throughout the UK and we at SDN should be really proud as placings at present show SDN Gold Challengers in 17th place with 2959km, followed closely by SDN Vic's Victors in 19th

place with just over 2881km (A great achievement as they only had four team members and two of them clocked up over 2671km!)

Sisters for SDN, a women's group from the Police, are at present placed 37th with just over 2056km.

We cannot yet bring you information of SDN Sandra's Dog Walks - Sandra has been taking part in the indi-

vidual challenge to clock up 201.40km. This has been an incredible challenge as some people taking it up did not believe they would do many kilometres at all but they have tried and achieved, often surprising themselves.

We want to thank all participants, our members, West Mercia Police and those taking part from Shropshire CCG.

We will inform you of final placings when we can, however we would ask that anyone with sponsorship money should try to collect it in as soon as possible.

Cheques should be made payable to Shropshire Disability Network. For further information, please call 07780 852 229

Atos and Capita 'poach paramedics'

An NHS whistle-blower claims the A&E crisis is being made worse because highly trained NHS paramedics are being poached by Atos and Capita to do assessments for Personal Independence Payment, instead of saving lives. There is a severe shortage of paramedics.

Paramedics in the NHS usually have to train to degree level, yet salaries range from just £21,478 to £27,901 for the most experienced. In addition, the job involves a good deal of shift work and unsocial hours.

Atos, on the other hand, offer paramedics who join them as full-time PIP assessors a salary of £32,000 plus private medical insurance, life assurance, income protection insurance and no unsocial hours. It is hardly surprising if

paramedics choose to make the move to Atos, or to Capita who offer a very similar package.

The paramedic shortage is also taking cash from the NHS because paramedic cover is being provided by much more expensive private companies. Health trusts around the UK are having to advertise abroad to try to attract paramedics.

Paramedics are also vital for reducing pressure on A&E departments by providing effective treatment on the spot.

In many cases this reduces the amount of time spent on patients when they arrive at A&E or removes the need for a visit altogether. [Source: Benefits & Work online newsletter]

Book tells story of disease fight

A new book by a Shropshire woman named Donna could make essential reading for those dealing day-to-day with a chronic illness. *How is Holly?* is an account of the progression of the illness CFS/ME. Her daughter Holly began to show symptoms at age 11.

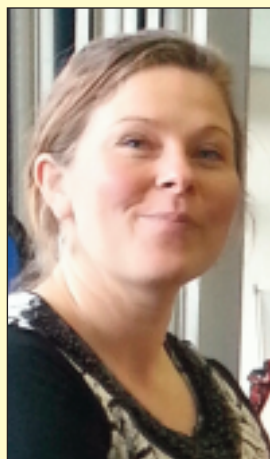
The book details Holly's medical 'treatment', alternative routes and the impact on family life. Now 20, Holly has a job, a flat and a boyfriend who is sympathetic to the needs of her condition. Proceeds from the book will go to supporting people with CFS/ME. It can be purchased directly from Donna by sending a cheque (made payable to DA Teague) to Cherry Trees, Tilstock, Whitchurch, SY13 3NR

The cost is £8.50 including P&P. Donna is a committee member of Shropshire ME Group, from whose newsletter this article comes. She is also a Peer Group Facilitator at Radbrook Green surgery in Shrewsbury and can be contacted by email atdateague@hotmail.co.uk



Helen writes her last blog for SDN ...

Looking back at 2014



Helen Freedman has written her last blog for us as Senior Business Manager of Energize Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. SDN is so grateful to Helen for her help in supporting our meetings, writing blogs, alerting us to events that are of interest to our members, and so much more. We have enjoyed working with her and will miss her. Helen, we wish you well as you in your new, busy role! But this is not “bye bye”, we will still have contact with Helen and she will be keeping an eye on us. Read on to find out what Helen will soon be doing, including how she will support SDN in 2016!

New Year is normally a time to look ahead and be excited about the future. But as I finish my last month in my role at the County Sports Partnership I can't help to also look back to 2014 and reflect on how much we have achieved. It's hard to believe that it was only April 2014 that I first offered to write a blog for SDN (Ruby had long been asking me).

My aim was to give members a flavour of what the County Sports Partnership do. After all, as the infrastructure partnership for sport and physical activity and the forum of interest within the Voluntary and Community Sector, our strapline is 'Getting Hearts Beating Faster' and

fied that few disabled people in Shropshire were taking part in sport and physical activities and we wanted to change this. By creating a strong partnership with SDN and thanks to the Shropshire Providers Consortium bid to the Big Lottery, Shropshire now has its very own Inclusion Officer!

And so it is with great excitement that I hand over the reins to Jess. I'm really looking forward to receiving future editions of *YourVoice* and reading case studies of how this project has changed people's lives – because I have no doubt it has

by that we mean everybody. We'd previously identi-

the potential to do so. I'm also looking forward to running the London Marathon for Shropshire Disability Network.

I've had to delay my 2015 entry until 2016 since I'm expecting a baby girl in mid-March. However, I look forward to starting my training after a short break following her birth and will no doubt let you know how it's going ahead of the big day in April 2016!

I've never done a marathon, so the prospect seems very daunting right now!! A final big thanks to Ruby for her support and enthusiasm towards me over the last few years, you truly are inspirational!

'Call halt to sanctions' until inquiry is held

Pleas to the Government to suspend benefit sanctions pending a fundamental review of their impact, especially on the mentally ill and disabled, were made at the first session of a broad inquiry by the Department for Work and Pensions select committee.

In a session involving academics, food bank administrators, disabled groups and employment service professionals, the select committee repeatedly heard the sanctions regime had changed over the last two years, creating a punitive culture of fear – especially amongst the disabled. Mathew Oakley, the independent reviewer for sanctions appointed by

the DWP did not join in the fiercest criticism but said it would be wise for the Government to undertake a general “stock-take” of the system in view of the extent to which it has changed over the past two parliaments.

He was one of many witnesses who said the Government lacked systematic information on what happened to Job Seeker's Allowance claimants if they are sanctioned, including whether they went into work, the black economy or just disengaged, leading to the growing gap between the number unemployed and the numbers claiming JSA. [Source: Benefits & Work]

Review sought after benefits cut suicide

The sister of a partially sighted man who killed himself after his benefits were cut is calling on the Government to publish its review into his case, one of 60 internal investigations of suicides linked to benefit changes since 2012.

Linda Cooksey found the body of her brother, Tim Salter, 53, who was agoraphobic and suffered mental health problems, in his Stourbridge home. There was no food in his house, no money in his bank account, and in the dustbin she found a letter from a housing association threatening eviction.

The Staffordshire coroner ruled that a major factor in Mr Salter's death was that his state benefits had been “greatly reduced, leaving him almost destitute”.



Campaign growing to get cars off pavements

The new “hotline” number 101 is proving central to stirring local authorities into action over pavement parking. But much else is also happening, here and in other parts of the country, to clear our footpaths of this scourge.

Several SDN supporters tell us they have used 101 to report dangerous parking to the police. A typical Twitter message to SDN says: “I reported a driver via 101 last week and will do so whenever I see a vehicle obstructing access.”

We have also been told: “I reported a car owner to the police via the 101 phone number. Campaign groups across the geographical county of Shropshire have put flyers on wind-screens and whenever possible are asking the car owners why they are doing it. Always the answer seems to be that they are waiting for someone, or they just ‘popped out to the shop’. No excuse for illegally parking in our opinion”

Here are two more messages just to underline the importance of the issue: “Pavement parking is selfish and inconsiderate and a danger to the blind, partially sighted and disabled members of our community as well as other users such as parents with prams or pushchairs.”

“I came unstuck the other day when I was on my mobility scooter. I could not get passed a vehicle parked on the pavement. I had to reverse and find a dropped kerb in order to go on the road and round the vehicle,” wrote another member.

Radio Shropshire has debated the issue. “Vehicles parked on pavements can be annoying for some



walkers but for those who have difficulty getting around, especially the blind, being forced to walk in the road to get past cars is dangerous,” said one caller.

In 2011 the Government gave councils powers to act against pavement parkers, and SDN is among those applying pressure on councillors who seem unaware of their powers.

All councils in England now have permission to use signs to indicate a local pavement parking ban. Until recently councils had to gain special authorisation from the Government each time they wanted to put a pavement parking ban in place.

The Transport Minister said at the time: “There is a selfish minority who do not use their common sense and dump their cars wherever it suits them without a second thought for others. I hope that reducing the bureaucracy involved in banning pavement parking will make it easier for councils to use their powers to tackle this nuisance and make life safer for everyone.”

Call to members

SDN has been asked if we can urge our members to report issues of pavement parking by calling 101 in order to try to enforce the law and help those in our communities who are forced into danger by selfish and unthinking drivers.

Join the discussion on Twitter at @shropdisnetwork

MP's new law Bill

MP Martin Horwood has introduced a Private Member's Bill in the Commons, the Pavement Parking Bill 2014-15, which hopefully will get its Second Reading by the summer. To contact him eial martin@martinhorwood.net

United in action

All these charities and organisations have united to tackle pavement parking because this issue affects so many different people:

Guide Dogs
Living Streets
National Assn of Local Councils
Age UK
RNIB
DeafBlind UK
Design Council
Independent Age
Whizz Kidz
Thomas Pocklington Trust
Transport for All
Sense
Macular Society
Civic Voice
Glass-House Community Led Design
Keep Britain Tidy
National Pensioners Convention
National Federation of Occupational Pensioners

Sarah Gayton, told us about her film *Walking Into Trouble* which highlights the dangers for blind and partially sighted people in navigating their high street independently. See it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOObDPOSm-g&app=desktop>



Research by Carers UK shows that more than 10.5 million people will become carers in the next five years, and it has produced some other surprising stats about caring as well:

- Almost 6,000 people take on a new caring role every day
- £1.1 billion of Carer's Allowance goes unclaimed every year
- 42% of carers miss out on financial support
- A third of people caring at any one time will be new to that role

The charity warns that unless changes are made, new carers will be left under-equipped to deal with the challenges of caring – as are many existing carers.

“As our population ages, the pressure on families to provide care and support to loved ones will

Every day, thousands become new carers

continue to increase,” says Carers UK. “The research estimates that over 2.1 million people will find themselves in a new caring role every year, facing new challenges and often trying to juggle work and other family responsibilities with looking after an older, disabled or seriously ill relative or friend.”

Chief Executive of Carers UK
Helena Herklots said: “Taking on

a new caring role can happen quite suddenly and people can be thrown into a situation which turns their lives upside down. Without help carers can find themselves facing financial hardship, health problems, emotional stress and relationship breakdown. They can be pushed to breaking point.

“A third of people caring at any one time will be new to that role. This presents a big challenge for services, local authorities and the NHS as they need to identify and reach out to new carers who are not accessing essential help and support. With the Care Act coming into force in April, it's an opportunity to make this happen for carers.”

To contact Carers UK call 0808 808 7777; website <http://www.carersuk.org/>

New Care Act is set to bring major changes

The Care Act comes into force in April, bringing in the first overhaul of social care legislation in some 60 years. Its development and passage through Parliament was also remarkable for another reason – all the political parties agreed to its main points.

After a public consultation that attracted some thousand responses, a joint committee of MPs and peers was established to go over the draft Bill microscopically. Many of its 107 recommendations for amendment were adopted.

Ministers proved willing to accept changes to the legislation during almost two years of scrutiny. Further changes were agreed as the Bill worked its way through Parliament.

Paul Burstow, the Liberal Democrat MP and former care services minis-

ter who chaired the joint committee, said: “In a way it feels modest because everyone agrees with it, but it contains some revolutionary ideas.”

Five of the many changes are:

- Councils have a duty to promote wellbeing and this will now apply not just to service users but also to carers. And not only to carers of adults: a corresponding duty in respect of parent carers of disabled under-18s is included in the Children and Families Act 2014.
- People receiving care and support from a regulated provider and arranged by their council, whether in a residential setting or at home, will now be covered by the Human Rights Act. However, the provision will not apply to people paying for their own care.
- Councils must now enable people to access independent financial advice to help steer them through

the complexities of care funding. Such advice must be accessible to all, so it cannot be simply online, and must be “proportionate” to an individual's needs, including advocacy where appropriate.

- For the first time, there will be a system by which people may appeal against council decisions on eligibility and funding for care and support. The details of the system will be set out in regulations, but it will be independent and ministers will have authority to make its decisions binding.
- Provisions written into the bill at the last gasp will, campaigners say, stop the closure of well-run hospitals because of problems in the NHS in the wider local area. Ministers had intended to take powers to force closures, but the campaign group 38 Degrees believes wording agreed at the 11th hour of the parliamentary process has averted this.

[Source: The Guardian]



Views of disabled sought on stadium experiences

How do you get on when you go to sports events? Everything from wheelchair access and disabled parking to accessible toilets, hearing loops and treatment by other supporters is currently coming under the official microscope.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport says it wants to improve disabled access (and presumably facilities generally) at sports grounds and stadiums and has created a survey to gather information.

Whatever the political motive might

be, it's not often that disabled sports fans are asked their views, so go for it!

Organisers want to hear from fans of all sports, but in particular rugby, cricket, football, hockey, basketball, cycling and motor-racing.

To take the survey go to:
<http://survey.dwp.gov.uk/index.php?id=18657>

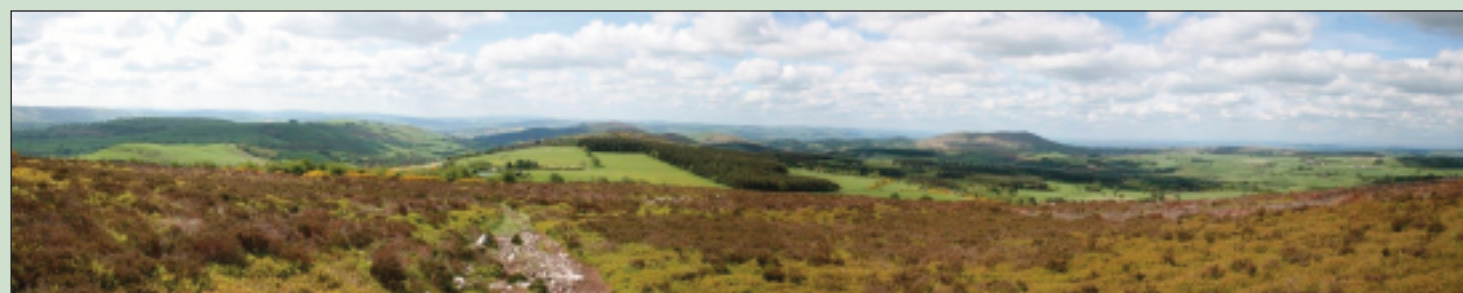
There doesn't seem to be a paper version of the survey available.

Last year Britain's football clubs

were urged to take urgent action to redress some of the "woeful" lack of appropriate support and space for disabled spectators – and they were reminded that they have legal obligations to make adequate adjustments for disabled fans.

Research showed nearly half of Premier League clubs don't have half the wheelchair space they should for disabled people.

To read the full report go to
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bid-to-improve-disabled-access-at-sports-stadiums>



Are you a Shropshire wild man or woman?

"Shropshire Wild Teams" is a programme that will support people with mental health problems so that they can engage in countryside management volunteering. It will also offer other outdoor based activities such as animal tracking skills, green woodworking crafts, navigation and species data collection.

The programme, funded by Shropshire Council's "Shropshire Outdoors", will support people to

improve physical activity levels and general wellbeing through experiencing some of Shropshire's stunning and beautiful locations.

It will involve one day a week over a six month period, working on a variety of small projects. Teams will visit parks and green sites managed by Shropshire Council as well as reserves and landscapes managed by partner organisations such as Shropshire Wildlife Trust, the Landscape Partnership Scheme and the National Trust.

Professionals and experts working within these organisations will train the teams to take on tasks, while the overall co-ordination and group facilitation will be managed by an Outdoors Development Officer from the Shropshire Outdoors team. At the end of the six month pro-

gramme the volunteers will be given direction and support to move on with their new knowledge, skills and contacts – to help them continue to engage in the outdoors.

The programme promises to have a positive outcome for the individuals, local communities and Shropshire's wider natural and cultural heritage. If it is successful and there is demand from other groups – say people with physical disabilities – then similar programmes could be possible in the future.





Hunger is here to stay until

The recent All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger in the United Kingdom ended its inquiry with these words:

“We are left with two abiding impressions. The first is that hunger is here to stay in Britain until counteraction is taken. The second is that appropriate action is not only desirable but possible, and we have taken this opportunity to outline how to establish once again a country where no one is hungry.

“The Inquiry has set out in this report a series of immediate and long-term reforms which would ensure that every individual and household in this country has adequate resources, facilities and abilities to purchase, prepare and cook fresh, healthy and affordable food.....

“Which is why we propose that those people who have responded so magnificently to the current crisis, and without any government prompting – the food bank

People with disabilities are disproportionately likely to face financial hardship and all the issues that go with that, including hunger. Despite Government cruelties, at least this group of MPs have shown compassion

movement as we have called it – should take the lead in establishing a body that we have called Feeding Britain. They should be joined of course in this establishment with other relevant bodies as well as representatives of the eight government departments that have some responsibility for seeing that Britain can feed itself. It is through Feeding Britain that a strategy to abolish hunger as we know it can be successfully mounted.”

Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/olbg5xp>

[Source: Oswestry Equality Group's newsletter, The Leveller, No. 20]

Printable hand is helping millions

The Nominet Trust 100 is a global list of 100 inspiring ventures by digital innovators who are using technology to tackle some of the world's biggest social problems – and here is one specific to the world of disability...

Lending someone a hand has taken on a whole new meaning with the development of a printable self-assembly prosthetic. The makers say the sort of prosthetic that costs tens of thousands of pounds can be yours for about £30. The E-nable community, formed in 2013, is the outcome of an unlikely collaboration between a carpenter in South Africa and a puppeteer in America.

When carpenter Richard Van As lost four fingers in an accident at work in 2011, he could not afford a factory-made prosthetic. But inspired by a YouTube sci-fi film of a giant mechanical hand he got in touch with its



maker to see if they could collaborate on a homemade mechanical hand that would work along similar lines.

Special effects maker Ivan Owen, 10,000 miles away, agreed. A year later, the pair had a prototype. They realised they could help millions with upper limb deficiencies but also wondered if they could turn the hand into parts for 3D printing. The Maker-Bot company donated two 3D printers to help them try.

While a lower jaw had previously

been made with 3D printers, Owen and Van As were the first to attempt to use the new technology to make prosthetic hands. They have shared the design files for free online, so that others can make their own cheap prosthetic, and improve on the design.

Today, numerous websites, online collaboration communities, and a conference at Johns Hopkins Medical Center have helped thousands create hand and arm designs, and deliver hundreds of devices to recipients all over the world.

The community plans international initiatives and workshops, educational materials, and software for libraries to help anyone with a web browser make inexpensive life-changing adaptive devices. Project URL: enablingthefuture.org Project Twitter: @Enablethefuture



Why cast an able-bodied actor in a disabled part?

Eddie Redmayne has been nominated for an Oscar for his portrayal of Stephen Hawking in *A Theory of Everything*, but should the role have been played by a disabled actor?



Eddie Redmayne, "perfect" as a motor neurone sufferer

It has been suggested by some film critics that playing a disabled character is a sure way to secure at least a nomination, and probably a win. Some 16% of Best Actor and Actress awards have been for portrayals of disability or mental illness.

Some disability campaigners question why these roles are not given to people with disabilities or mental illness who, they say, could portray the nuances of living with such conditions more accurately.

In a recent Guardian article Frances Ryan said that "while 'blackening up' is rightly now greeted with outrage, 'crippling up' is still greeted with awards". She asked whether there was actually much difference between the two, arguing that in both cases actors use prosthetics or props to alter their appearance to fit the role and perpetuate under-representation in the industry.

RJ Mitte, who played Walter White Jr in *Breaking Bad*, and has cerebral palsy, said in an interview with BBC Newsnight that nobody should be denied the chance to play a disabled role. "The issue it comes down to is an accurate and honest portrayal of what that disability means to so many millions of people."

So did Redmayne achieve this portrayal of life with motor neurone disease (MND)? Sarah Ezekiel, who has MND says he did. "I still can't believe how well he played the part," she says. "I never thought that an actor could replicate what MND does

to the body, but he did it perfectly." In the film, Redmayne has to convey the transition from non-disabled to disabled. The argument goes that a disabled actor could not have played Hawking before he got MND.

Could it always be feasible to cast a disabled actor? An actor with the same level of disability as Raymond Babbitt in *Rain Man* would not have

been able to play the role. The number of disabled parts is smaller than the number of disabled actors so competition is rife. Film critic Callum Madge also argues that a key reason why disabled actors don't get cast is because the industry is a shallow one, with directors regularly choosing not to cast someone because of their height, build, hair colour or any other feature they don't want in their production.

If the top roles playing disabled characters are going to non-disabled actors, whatever the reasons, it is restricting the opportunities for disabled actors, says blind film critic Tommy Edison.

The onus is on disabled people to push past the criticism dealt to them, perhaps unfairly, in the industry, he says. [Source: BBC News, Ouch]

Who won what ... but few were really disabled

Many actors have won or been nominated for Oscars for portraying characters with physical or mental disabilities. Here are just a few, from the excellent AMC website:

- Fredric March won Best Actor for Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde (1931)
- Ronald Colman was nominated for his role as shell-shocked amnesiac Charles Rainier in *Random Harvest* (1942)
- Harold Russell, a genuine amputee, won Best Supporting Actor as Homer Parrish in *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946) He is also the only performer to win two Oscars for the same role - he was voted an honorary Oscar for his performance.
- Arthur Kennedy was nominated as Best Actor for his part as World War Two veteran Larry Nevins, blinded in combat, in *Bright Victory* (1951)
- Alan Arkin was nominated as Best Actor for his role as a deaf-mute in *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1968)
- Sir John Mills won Best Supporting Actor for his role as the mute village idiot in *Ryan's Daughter* (1970), making him the only male actor to win an Oscar for a non-speaking role
- Jack Nicholson won Best Actor as anarchic misfit Randle Patrick McMurphy in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975)
- Jon Voight's portrayal of Luke Martin, a paralysed Vietnam veteran won him Best Actor in *Coming Home* (1978)
- John Malkovich was nominated as Best Supporting Actor for blind boarder Mr Will in *Places in the Heart* (1984)
- Dustin Hoffman won Best Actor as autistic Raymond Babbitt in *Rain Man* (1988)
- Daniel Day-Lewis won for artist and author Christy Brown, a spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy victim who could only write and draw with his foot, in *My Left Foot* (1989)
- Three years later Al Pacino won for his role as blind Lt Col Frank Slade in *Scent of a Woman* (1992)
- Geoffrey Rush won Best Actor as mentally disabled Australian concert pianist David Helfgott, in *Shine* (1996)
- Jamie Foxx won as the legendary Ray Charles in *Ray* (2004)
- Colin Firth took Best Actor as stuttering monarch George VI in *The King's Speech* (2010)

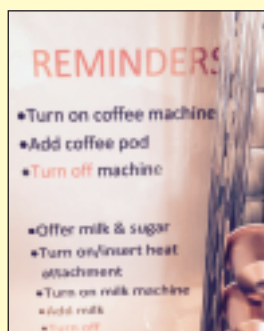


Why you should never ask Kate for tea...

Australian dementia sufferer Kate Swaffer has built up an international following with her blog. Recently a friend asked her to write something about the struggles that others don't see. This is part of her response...

"It is definitely more difficult writing about them, as then I cannot exist in my denial bubble! However ... if my blog makes others with dementia feel like they are not doing enough to live well, I feel a responsibility to be more open.

This is a photo of the laminated sign I have next to the coffee machine, as



many days I struggle to make a coffee, especially when I have visitors. It is a bugger if they ask for tea, although I usually manage black tea no problems...

[I have a] sign next to my cooker top, as many times now I have left the gas burner on underneath a pan all day ... even with the signs, I often don't think to follow them, or take any notice of them. They can only help so much. I have a sign in the bathroom, for when I need reminding of the order of activities in the shower, and one in my wardrobe for dressing, just in case... We have reminders on my phone and my electronic calendar, and my husband has reminders on his phone to ring me

and check ... This system still often fails. There are many more "invisible-to-others" disabilities requiring strategies to support functioning in some way, but extremely demoralising and embarrassing for me to admit to so publicly here, and even more humiliating for me when others visit and see them.

....My darling husband will hate this particular blog, as he is seeing me struggle with more things than I was a month ago, and speaking about them so candidly distresses us both, but perhaps more so him. In so many ways, he is the one who is suffering watching from the sidelines, not me. As many of us say, onwards and upwards through the fog..."

'Profiles' reflect approach to mental health issues

A quarter of the UK's population will suffer a mental health problem in the course of a year, costing £105 billion in England alone.

The Government says mental health is high on its agenda, and that it is focusing on outcomes for sufferers. The indicators included in the "Community Mental Health Profiles" reflect that strategy.

The Profiles present mental health information for local authorities. They are designed to give an overview of risks, prevalence and services at a local, regional and national level.

Here is the official summary of some major mental health issues. Physical illness is known to be closely related to mental health problems. People with mental health problems are twice as likely as others to experience long-term illness or disability.

Dementia is described as "catastrophic, progressive global deterioration in intellectual function" and is

a main cause of late life disability. In a third of cases, it is associated with other psychiatric symptoms such as depressive disorder, adjustment disorder, generalised anxiety disorder and alcohol related problems. Many people with dementia go undiagnosed.

According to the Alzheimer's Society, Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, affecting around 465,000 people in the UK. Alzheimer's is a progressive disease, which means that gradually, over time, more parts of the brain are damaged. As this happens, the symptoms become more severe.

Depression is common and disabling. The estimated prevalence of major depression among 16-65 year olds in the UK is 21 per thousand, with women more likely to suffer than men. Mixed anxiety and depression is prevalent in a further 10% of adults attending general practices.

Unipolar depression is a major de-

pressive episode that occurs without the manic phase characteristic of bipolar depression.

Major depression may include a combination of symptoms that interfere with a person's ability to work, sleep, study, eat, and enjoy once pleasurable activities. Major depression is disabling and prevents a person from functioning normally.

Schizophrenia is one of the most common serious mental health conditions. The illness has a range of symptoms including hallucinations, delusions, and difficulty in thinking.

Doctors describe schizophrenia as a psychotic illness. Some five people in every 1000 experience a psychotic disorder (including schizophrenia and manic depression).

People with learning disabilities demonstrate the complete spectrum of mental health problems, with higher prevalence than found in those without learning disabilities.



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Names and numbers that might help

If your organisation or cause is not listed here please let us know. Email the editor at newsletter@shropshire-disability.net or write to him: Peter Staples, 8 Gorse Lane, Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury, SY3 0JJ

Shropshire Council Disability Services -
www.shropshire.gov.uk/disability.nsf

Telford & Wrekin Adult Social Care Directory - services available and how to access them
http://www.telford.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.aspx?fileID=116&categoryID=100010

A4U Disability Advice Centre - Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury SY3 8HQ; 01743 256218; advice@a4u.org.uk

Autonomy - self-help and social for Aspergers in Shropshire, Telford and Borders - autonomyschropshire@yahoo.co.uk

British Red Cross Home from Hospital Service -
Shrewsbury - Bradbury Park House, 3 Park Plaza, Battlefield Enterprise Park, Shrewsbury, SY1 3AF; 01743 457810
Telford - Suite 3.01, Grosvenor House, Central Park, Telford, TF2 9TW, 01952 209840

Care Farming West Midlands - www.carefarmingwm.org.uk;
stewart.scull@carefarmingwm.org.uk or Mobile: 07957 839634

Carers Direct - 0808 802 0202
www.nhs.uk/carersdirect/Pages/CarersDirectHome.aspx

Citizens Advice Shropshire -
15 College Hill, Shrewsbury, SY1 1LY, 08444 119900;
www.cabshropshire.org.uk
Town offices all have the same number - 08444 991100
Ludlow CAB, Stone House, Corve Street, SY8 1DG
Oswestry CAB, 34 Arthur Street, SY1 1JN
Shrewsbury CAB, Fletcher House, 15 College Hill, SY1 1LY

Community Directory for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/community.nsf>

Disability Arts in Shropshire - 01743 272939/271676; www.dasharts.org

Disability Directory - Information, aids and mobility services
www.ableize.com/Disabled-Groups-and-Clubs-by-County/Shropshire/

Disability Football Directory 01952 407198
<http://www.disabilityfootball.co.uk/Madeleysports.html>

Disability-friendly holiday accommodation
www.friendly-places.com/categories/disability-friendly/disability-friendly.asp?Location=Shropshire

Disabled and Wheelchair Athletics Directory
www.apparelyzed.com/disability-directory/adaptive-sports/disabled-athletics/

Enable - supported employment services for people with disabilities in Shropshire and Telford, Unit 4, Owen House, Radbrook Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 9SR enable@shropshire.gov.uk. 01743 276900

Headway Shropshire (brain injured and families)
Holsworth Park, Oxon Business Park, Shrewsbury, SY3 5HJ
01743 365271; www.headwayshropshire.org.uk

Healthwatch - Shropshire 4 The Creative Quarter, Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury, SY2 6LG; 01743 237884; enquiries@healthwatchshrop-

Parent & Carer Council Shropshire

www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups
PACC provides an index of support groups for children with disabilities in Shropshire. The following groups are listed on the PACC site. Where possible we list direct contacts, but refer to the PACC site for full details)
Allsorts (South Shropshire, for behavioural conditions) 07813043841
www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/71-allsorts
Bridgnorth Buddies (Parent-led, Special Needs) 07968 544182 or 07790 780631; email Buddies20@yahoo.co.uk
www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/72-bridgnorth-buddies
Haughton School, Telford, drop-in for parents of pupils with more complex special needs) 01952 387551 or 01952 387552; www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/83-haughton-school-drop-in
Onevision (visual impairment) 01952 385269
[/www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/77-onevision](http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/77-onevision)
STACS (Aspergers, 16+) 01952 254594 or 01939 260273; email louise.griffiths@carerscontact.org.uk
www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/76-stacs
Autistic Supporters (if you suspect your child is autistic, or has recently been diagnosed) 01743 356298
www.shropshireautisticsupporters.co.uk/?q=node/2
Deaf Children's Society 01952 770019; email: nat4sdcs@aol.com
www.ndcs.org.uk
Down's Syndrome 01743 233802, 01948 880110 or 01588 640319
www.dsa-shropshire.org.uk
Dyslexia Association 01743 231205; www.thesda.org.uk
Wheelchair Users 01743 350460 or 01952 252243
SKiD (Shropshire Kids Insulin Dependent, associated with Diabetes UK) 01743 873724 or 01743 364366; email: home@morkot.go-plus.net
SPECTRUM (Autistic Support group) email: netgriffiths@fsmail.net
www.spectrum.t83.net/
Telford STAA (supports parents/carers of children with ASD, ADHD, and challenging behaviour) 01952 457439 or 01952 617758; email: julie@parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk or lesley@parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk
Steps (help for parents/carers, lower limb abnormalities) 01743 355363
PODS (Parents Opening Doors - Telford, forum for views on services) 01952457439; email: julie@parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk

shire.co.uk; www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk

Telford & Wrekin Meeting Point House, Southwater Square, Telford Town Centre, TF3 4HS; 01952 739540; info@healthwatchtelfordandwrekin.org.uk; <http://www.healthwatchtelfordandwrekin.org.uk>

Landau - supported employment services for people with disabilities, 5 Landau Court, Tan Bank, Wellington. TF1 1HE, 01952 245 015, admin@landau.co.uk

Listen Not Label - User-led organisation for disabled and carers in Telford & Wrekin; Tina Jones, manager, 01952 916109; admin team 01952-916108; Meeting Point House, Southwater Sq, Telford, TF3 4HS

Marches Community Enterprise
01584 878402 or 07891094901

ME Connect - Helpline 0844 576 5326 between 10.00-noon, 2.00-4.00 and 7.00-9.00; meconnect@meassociation.org.uk

Motor Neurone Disease Association - MND Connect 08457 62 62 62 mndconnect@mndassociation.org

Multiple Sclerosis Society - 01952 250038; www.mssociety.org.uk/telford

NHS Choices - www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Omega (National Association for End of Life Care) - www.omega.uk.net/

OSCA Citizen Advocacy - Roy Fletcher Centre, 12-17 Cross Hill, Shrewsbury, SY1 1JE; 01743 368370; info@oscacitizenadvocacy.org.uk; www.oscacitizenadvocacy.org.uk

Oswestry Equality Group - oswestryequalitygroup@gmail.com; 01691 680382

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Parent and Carer Council (PACC) - see panel above - Shropshire - making parents and carers aware of developments that affect their children and giving them a voice - www.paccshropshire.org.uk; PO Box 4774, Shrewsbury, SY1 9EX; 0845 661 2205; enquiries@paccshropshire.org.uk

Parent Partnership Service - www.parentpartnership-shropshire-andtelford.org.uk/#/useful-links/4551168089

PODS - independent forum in Telford for families of children with disability or additional need; Jayne Stevens 0777 534 2092 or 07824 631 297; info@podstelford.org; www.podstelford.org

Primary Care Trust www.shropshire.nhs.uk/Get-Involved/

Red Cross - see under B

Rural Community Council (RCC) - 4 The Creative Quarter, Shrewsbury Business Park, SY2 6LG; 01743 360641; Carers Support Service 01743 341995; Hearing Loss Support 01743 342168; Sight Loss Support 01743 342168; Wise & Well team 01743 342179; Gusto 01743 342162; fax: 01743 342179; www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk/

Scope (Cerebral Palsy) - www.scope.org.uk/services/shropshire

Shrewsbury Dial-a-Ride - Sundorne Trade Park, Featherbed Lane, SY1 4NS. Enquiries 01743 440350; Direct Line 01743 440744; Mobile 07891094901, linda@shrewsburydialaride.org.uk

Shrewsbury Hard of Hearing Club - URC Church Hall, Coleham Head, Shrewsbury, SY3 7BJ; Contact Erica Horner 01743 873540, ericahorner2@googlemail.com

Shropshire ME Group - www.shropshiremegroup.org.uk; 07516 401097

Shropshire MIND - www.shropshiremind.org
Observer House, Holywell St, Shrewsbury, SY2 6BL 01743 368647

Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service
www.shropshirepcas.co.uk/default.htm

Shropshire Rehabilitation Centre - Lancaster Road, Shrewsbury, SY1 3NJ; 01743 453600

Shropshire Volunteering Team - Promote your volunteering opportunities. <http://shropshirevcs.org.uk/site/volunteering/>

Shropshire and Staffordshire Heart and Stroke Network
Lambda House, Hadley Park East, Telford, TF1 6QJ
Email: yuen-ting.cheung@shropshirepct.nhs.uk 01952 228490

Sight Loss Shropshire (formerly Voluntary Association for the Blind)
The Lantern, Meadow Farm Drive, Harlescott, Shrewsbury, SY1 4NG; 01743 210808; sightlossshropshire@shropshire.gov.uk

Signal (tinnitus and hyperacusis sufferers, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin) - 9 College Hill, Shrewsbury, SY1 1LZ; 01743 364 644, 358 356 or 364 644; info@signal.org.uk; <http://www.signal.org.uk/>

Taking Part (for people with learning difficulties) Louise House, Roman Rd, Shrewsbury, SY3 9JN; 01743 363399; takingpart@takingpart.co.uk; www.takingpart.co.uk

VCSA - Voluntary & Community Sector Assembly
www.shrop.net/shropvcsassembly

Voluntary Association for the Blind (see Sight Loss Shropshire)

If you're not in our directory, just send us your details

Events and courses

Carers rights are changing

If you provide unpaid care for an adult, then "Carers rights are changing" is for you. It will be held at the Glebe Centre, Glebe Street, Wellington, on 29 January from 10.00-12.30. Paul Taylor, a Director of Health, Wellbeing & Care, will outline the Care Act and explain how it will affect unpaid family carers. Booking is essential. Call 01952 240209

Cottage Care coffee

Cottage Care is holding a coffee morning at its day centre - 79 Haygate Road, Wellington - on Friday 30 January, from 10.30 to 12.00. All are welcome and a call to 01952 243796 will get you more information about the centre's activities.

See and Hear Van at RSH

Sight Loss Shropshire's See and Hear Van will be at Shrewsbury Hospital on 5 February, from 10.00-2.00. Parked outside the main outpatients entrance, the van carries information about services and specialist equipment for anyone with a visual and/or hearing impairment plus IT equipment on which visitors can view demonstrations of the most recent innovations in the sensory impairment field. Advice and follow-up information and contacts are available from volunteer staff who are specially trained for this work. Call: 01743 210808

Deaf Forum speakers

Jackie Jeffrey, chair of the Shropshire Voluntary and Community Service Association and chief executive of Shropshire Citizens' Advice, will be a guest speaker at the Shropshire Deaf & Hard of Hearing Forum on 25 February, from 2-4, at the Trinity Centre, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury. Also speaking will be John Vaughan, who trekked to the Everest Base Camp, in aid of Hearing Dogs for the Deaf. Call: Estells Morris, 0845 833 9585.

SDN awareness day

SDN's first awareness day for this year will be held at Princes Royal Hospital from 10.00-4.00 on 5 March. Please do come along to find out about our work and at the same time grab yourself a bargain as we will have a few things to sell.

YV services directory

This is a 'bulletin board' of services to the disability community. Any service that is genuinely for the benefit of people with disabilities is welcome to up to 40 words free. If you have a logo or artwork we will try to include it, but can't promise. Email your text to the editor at newsletter@shropshire-disability.net or write to him: Peter Staples, 8 Gorse Lane, Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury, SY3 0JJ

Sign as you speak: 1Starfish - to become a better communicator learn how to sign as you speak. Total Communication Training Courses for private, public and voluntary sectors. Also Makaton courses. Contact Mandy at www.1starfish.co.uk or 01743 891885 or 07939 600126

Used medical and mobility equipment: The British Red Cross sometimes has donated medical and mobility equipment for sale for a reasonable donation. Call Christine Hunt on 01743 457810. The donations received help maintain the medical loan department.

Shropshire Handyperson Service: Small jobs at £15+ VAT per hour, no call-out fee, 01743 458 347 mhishropshire.enquiries@mearsgroup.co.uk



Brotherly love beats bureaucracy

This started out to be a story about a disabled man who was beaten by bureaucracy, but it turned into a story about a disabled man's iron-willed little sister who beat bureaucracy on his behalf.

Jennifer Henderson started a petition through Change.org on behalf of her brother. She wrote: "My brother Mike is 47, a kind and gentle man. He has Downs Syndrome and now also dementia. Mike has lived with my mother for years but she is 67 and is no longer able to care for him.

"We've found a fantastic care home



in Wigton, which is Mike's hometown, close to our mum. They're willing to take him but the authorities are saying no.

"They haven't explained why. Instead they have recommended a unit miles away that is for the elderly. But Mike isn't elderly and he is part of the community in Wigton and deserves to live near his friends and family.

"The Government has repeatedly made promises that people with

learning disabilities should be cared for in their community near to loved ones, not shut away miles from home in units. This is an opportunity to keep that promise for one family.

"When we have a meeting with the authorities, we want to show them the support that exists for people like Mike, with learning disabilities, to get good care close to home."

That meeting came on 19 January - and there had been a change of the official mind. Mike can now stay in his local community just a street away from his mum.

To the 155,000-plus people all over the country who signed her petition Jennifer wrote: "This has been a hard fight so thank you so very, very much, without you we couldn't have done it!! Thank you so much! xxxx"

Helping others to help themselves

THURSDAYS FROM 10am TO 2pm
One day per week for up to twelve weeks for **FREE!**

*Supported volunteering opportunities for all -
creative arts and crafts,
community gardening,
cooking, helping yourself
by helping others!*

ONGOING UNTIL JUNE 2015
HELP WITH TRANSPORT AVAILABLE



Dean Corner Farmhouse - Breasley - Shropshire TF12 5JH

Just off B4106 Breasley to Much Wenlock road - follow our signs by the Round House.
Wyldwoods is a Community Interest Company. All staff and volunteers at Wyldwoods are CRB checked.

www.wyldwoods.co.uk

CONTACT:

Steph Brett on 01952 884224

(between 8.30am and 6.00pm weekdays)

Or email: steph.brett@wyldwoods.co.uk

Hearing programme to visit Shropshire towns

A free day-long Effective Hearing Programme will be held in Shrewsbury on 16 February.

"Do you have hearing loss and want to make better use of your hearing aids, or want better access to services and equipment? Whether or not you wear a hearing aid, you are welcome to attend and we encourage people to bring a family member or friend as the course will also be relevant to them," say the organisers.

"Effective Hearing Programmes give you a chance to share experiences, challenges and successes with others in similar situations. All our EHP tutors have personal experience of hearing loss."

The course will be held at the Central Baptist Church, Claremont Street, from 10-4. It will cover how the ear works, coping with tinnitus, coping in different day-to-day situations, serv-

ices and equipment available, access to work and the Equality Act 2010, and a brief insight into lip-reading and courses available locally. Those attending will need to stay the whole day. Complimentary drinks are provided.

Early application is important as places are limited. The course will also be offered as follows:

7 March – Telford Centre (9.30- 1)
21 March – Signal, The Hub, Riverside Mall, Shrewsbury (9.30- 1)
25 March – Telford Centre
27 April – Market Drayton
12 May – Bridgnorth
10 June – Oswestry
7 July – Church Stretton

For details call Rachel on 01743 342168 or email shls@shropshire-rcc.org.uk

Visit: www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk/services/individuals/hearing-loss-support/